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LABOR LEADERS IN THE CHURCH

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LABOR LEADERS IN THE CHURCH

While it is true that a large number of workingmen are outside the Church and haven't much sympathy with it, it is not true that their strongest leaders are alienated from it.

It has been a source of great satisfaction to meet with the active church officers and members who are in the lead of the labor movement in the United States. Practically every labor editor with whom I have talked is at least a member of some church and some of them are church officers.

I sat one day in the office of a labor paper in a western city, and in the course of an hour six men casually dropped in to see him about matters of business. I discovered that every one of these men was either a member or officer of some church in that city.

Some time ago at a conference of ministers, to which had been invited the representative of the Trades Assembly of that city, it transpired that this representative was one of the most active church men in the town.

The presidents of several labor unions which I have addressed are Presbyterian elders. I recently talked with three national officers in three different labor organizations, all living in the same city, and I discovered that all

three were the most aggressive officers in their particular churches.

I recently met the chairman of the Committee of Adjustment on a great railroad system, who was at one time talked of as the successor of Chief Arthur of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers. He was then representing the engineers of that system and he was an active man in the church to which he belonged. Indeed, he said with emphasis (and in his capacity as chairman of the Adjustment Committee he could speak with authority), that the labor problem would never be settled until the principles that are taught by Jesus Christ and the Church are applied to human society.

The national treasurer of one of the strongest labor federations in the country is a Presbyterian elder. He has the confidence of the entire association, and to him was committed, only the other day, one of the most delicate tasks that had ever been entrusted to a labor leader. Indeed, he was selected to call on the President of the United States in company with another official in whom the association had not the same confidence. It was quite evident that the churchman stood very high in the estimation of his fellow-unionists. In the same town I met another official whose name is known throughout the country as one of the most aggressive labor leaders. When I saw him he was looking for a preacher who could conduct a service in a little church in

which he was interested. He told me of some things that he was engaged in with regard to the pushing of several lines of religious effort in his town.

The fact that these prominent labor leaders are Christian men would seem to indicate that the church of Jesus Christ is not against the workingman, or else they would not be in the Church. These labor men are in the Church because they believe that the Church is a real help to the workingman. The Church has trained them. It has given them the characteristics which make them representative leaders. For this, the workingmen who are helped through their efforts are obligated to the Church.

Other Leaflets by Charles Stelzle

"Class Spirit in America."

"Has the Minister a 'Closed Shop'?"

"Is the Church Opposed to Workingmen?"

"Jesus Christ and Rich Men."

"Not 'Missions,' but Churches, for Workingmen."

"One Pastor, One Church, One Year and One Hundred Dollars."

"Special Work Among Workingmen by the Presbyterian Board of Home Missions."

"The Organization of an Anti-Poverty Society."

"The Plan of Campaign in the Interest of Workingmen."

"The Relation of the Church to the Labor Movement."